



DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

March 2020

Lenten greetings to you all again. I write to you to share a resource and an invitation.

On December 8, 2020 the Holy Father, Pope Francis, surprised the Church around the world by declaring this to be the Year of St. Joseph. This being the 150th anniversary of Blessed Pope Pius IX's proclamation of St. Joseph as the Patron of the Universal Church, Francis is encouraging us to turn to St. Joseph anew in this hour of need not only for the Church but for the whole world. The year will conclude December 8, 2021.

I propose to you several opportunities for entering into this year. There are of course many pilgrimages, books, and devotions – consecrations, prayers and traditions – that would all be wonderfully appropriate for the year. The Office of Catholic Formation has compiled many of these into a convenient resource that I will append to this letter. Two particular items that I would like to highlight are the availability of a plenary indulgence offered during this year as well as a novena to St. Joseph which will begin March 11th culminating on his feast March 19th.

I would also like to encourage you to read the Holy Father's letter, *Patris Corde*, 'With a Father's Heart'. In it, he beautifully details the many virtues of St. Joseph that make him a timeless saint particularly well-suited to intercede for us today. His devoted constancy to Mary and Jesus, his chastity, and his faith and trust in God are examples we should all seek to emulate – indeed, they are virtues the world around us *needs* to see us emulating!

In a world beset by challenge after challenge, St. Joseph remained faithful and hopeful – always deeply rooted in the knowledge that God was with him, guiding him and providing for him. Our world, too, at times feels beset by challenges, but with Joseph-like faith we too can persevere and stay close to the heart of the Lord.

Let us turn to St. Joseph for his intercession for the end of the pandemic, for peace amidst cultural and political unrest and upheaval, and as Pope Francis concludes, especially asking him "for the grace of graces: our conversion."

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.*

*Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage,
and defend us from every evil. Amen.*

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. James P. Powers
Bishop, Diocese of Superior